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STAY ENRICHED

VOLUME:1, ISSUE 632 | SILCHAR FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 28, 2025. EAST AND NE INDIA EDITION | e-mail: krctimes@gmail.com , www.krctimes.com

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## PERSPECTIVE

Hearing another person's perspective doesn't change who you are- it just widens your world.  
~ Harsh Goenka, Chairman, RPG Enterprises

## India's First Scientific MCU Criminal Tracking System Rolled Out in Assam

GUWAHATI

Assam has become the first state in the country to operationalise the Measurement Collection Unit (MCU) system under the Criminal Procedure Identification Act, 2022, marking a significant leap toward scientific and technology-driven policing.

Additional Director General of Police (ADGP) Munna Prasad said the deployment of MCU facilities marks a "major stride in scientific policing," adding that the system will make it far more difficult for habitual and repeat offenders to evade law enforcement.

The MCU framework allows police to collect, record and store a wide range of biometric and forensic identifiers of accused individuals. Moving far beyond digitised fingerprints, the system captures DNA samples, retina scans, full-body measurements, and other physiological markers using advanced forensic protocols. All data is securely stored in a digital, interconnected database.

Officials said the integrated system enables investigators across India to access biometric profiles in real time, significantly improving suspect identification and inter-state coordination during probes.

MCU facilities are now operational in every district headquarters in Assam, making it the first state with full-scale coverage of this technology. Police expect the system to be especially crucial in cases involving women and children, with DNA profiles of accused individuals being preserved to strengthen prosecution and prevent repeat offences.

### WHO SAID WHAT



**While a few in Assam's Muslim community supported polygamy, the majority called for its end. Assam's land, home to Sati Sadhani, Sati Radhika, Mulagabharu & Kanaklata, shapes all minds, guiding them towards justice & virtue. ~ Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma, CM Assam.**

NEW DELHI

Assam has secured the Bronze Medal for Swachh Pavilion at the 44th India International Trade Fair (IITF) 2025, held at Bharat Mandapam in the national capital.

The award was presented to Umesh Kumar, Director of the Assam Pavilion, by officials of the India Trade Promotion Organisation (ITPO) during the fair's closing ceremony on Thursday.

The pavilion earned recognition for its high standards of cleanliness, maintenance, and a visitor-friendly layout - criteria central to the Swachh Pavilion awards, which aim to promote hygiene and sustainability at one of India's largest trade exhibitions.

The IITF 2025, which ran from November 14 to 27, featured participation from several states, public sector undertakings and international exhibitors. Assam's pavilion highlighted the state's cultural heritage, traditional crafts, agricultural products and government initiatives, drawing significant footfall throughout the event.

Featuring 41 MSME stalls, innovative startups, and an extensive range of One District One Product (ODOP) displays,



the pavilion showcased Assam's diverse craftsmanship and growing industrial landscape. Key state agencies, including Assam Tourism, AIDC, the Agriculture Department, NEDFI and AGMC, joined hands to present a comprehensive picture of Assam's traditional strengths and emerging opportunities.

The pavilion recorded total sales of over Rs 1.80 crore, reflecting robust visi-

tor engagement and demand for Assam's showcased products.

Visitors were particularly drawn to the state's signature products, including premium Assam tea, finely crafted bamboo and cane items, agarwood products, and a variety of handloom and handicraft offerings. The pavilion also highlighted the state's expanding agro-based industries through an array of

food processing products.

Beyond commerce, the pavilion offered an immersive cultural experience. Exhibits spotlighted Assam's UNESCO World Heritage Sites, including Charaideo Maidam and Kaziranga National Park. Live performances of traditional dances, most notably the lively Bihu and the graceful Bagarumba, added to the pavilion's appeal. The display of the revered Guru Asana further reflected the spiritual and cultural legacy of Assam's Vaishnavite traditions, rooted in the teachings of Srimanta Sankaradeva.

Officials from the state government expressed satisfaction over the recognition, noting that the award reflects Assam's commitment to promoting a clean and organised presentation while showcasing its developmental progress and economic potential.

The India International Trade Fair is known for offering a platform for states and businesses to showcase innovations, investment opportunities, and unique regional products to a diverse national and global audience.

## Assam Launches 'Prerona' Scheme to Support 4.4 Lakh Class 10 Students With Monthly Stipend

GUWAHATI

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Friday rolled out the Prerona scheme, a new government initiative aimed at providing financial and emotional support to Class 10 students appearing for HSLC and CBSE board examinations.

The scheme was officially launched at the Srimanta Sankardeva Kalakshetra in the presence of Education Minister Ranaj Pegu and senior officials of the School Education Department.

Under Prerona, about 4.4 lakh students enrolled in government, provincialised and model schools will receive a monthly stipend of ₹300 for four months starting November 2025. The financial assistance will be transferred directly to students' bank accounts. The benefit is available to all students domiciled in Assam, irrespective of their economic background.

Officials said the scheme is designed to help students meet essential needs such as nutritious food, study materials and books-key requirements that often affect exam



preparation, particularly for those from rural or low-income families. The initiative also aims to reduce dropout rates and improve the overall pass percentage in Class 10 board examinations.

Speaking after the launch, Chief Minister Sarma said the government wants to ensure that no child's education is disrupted due to financial constraints. "The Assam government has launched the Prerona scheme to support Class 10 students across the state. Under this scheme, four lakh students will receive ₹300

per month for four months, directly credited to their bank accounts until they complete their matriculation examinations," he said.

Sarma noted that many students continue to struggle with the cost of basic necessities. "Many children in Assam cannot afford nutritious food or essential books. Some even find it difficult to pay for private tuitions," he said. The stipend, he added, would help reassure students that the government stands firmly behind them.

"This financial assistance will instil confidence among students and make them feel supported. They must know that the government will continue to stand by them through initiatives such as free college admissions and schemes like Njūt Moina," the Chief Minister said.

He stressed the importance of nurturing a positive mindset among young learners, saying financial hardship should not become a source of anxiety or discouragement. "No student should feel demotivated or uncertain about pursuing education because of monetary difficulties. Our aim is to help the boys and girls of Assam focus on their studies without fear or self-doubt," he added.

## Encounter breaks out at Manipur-Myanmar border, 4 injured

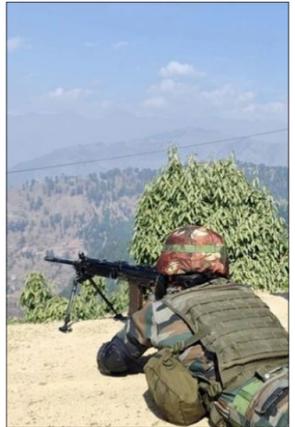
IMPHAL

An encounter broke out between the Indian security forces and armed men who possessed sophisticated weapons at the borders of Manipur with Myanmar to the south causing reportedly injuring at least four jawans at around 4:30 am on Friday, reports said.

The reports stated that some unknown armed men suspected to be the insurgents, mainly operating along the Manipur-Myanmar border, attacked a group of Assam Rifles personnel at the border pillar numbers 85 and 86 near the Saibol and Maringthel villages in Tengnoupal district.

Four jawans of the Assam Rifles who were deployed along the border sustained injuries when the armed men attacked with bombs and gunfire at around 4:30 am on Friday. There were fierce encounters for about half an hour between the two groups.

However, the armed men managed to escape from the scene and crossed the Myan-



mar border when the additional security forces were rushed to the spot. The injured personnel whose names were withheld at the time of the filing of this news report were given medical treatment. Details awaited.

## NSF Slams Mohan Bhagwat's 'Hindu Rashtra' Remark, Calls It a Threat to Secular India



KOHIMA

The Naga Students' Federation (NSF) on Thursday criticised RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat for describing India as a "Hindu Rashtra" at an event in Lucknow, calling the remark "unconstitutional" and a direct challenge to the country's secular framework.

In a statement, the NSF said Bhagwat's assertion runs counter to the Constitution's description of India as a sovereign, socialist, secular and democratic republic. "Secularism is a constitutional mandate, not a flexible

principle open to ideological reinterpretation," the federation said.

The organisation warned that comments made from positions of influence risk legitimising majoritarian narratives and heightening vulnerabilities among minority groups. It pointed to recurring incidents of discrimination and targeted violence against religious and cultural minorities-including Christians, Muslims, Sikhs, Buddhists and Indigenous communities-arguing that state responses have often fallen short.

Describing the remark as especially concerning for Indigenous Nagas, the NSF said assertions of a singular religious identity undermine the Union's pluralistic character and threaten constitutional equality. Nagas, it noted, have a long history of asserting their cultural autonomy and their right to co-exist with dignity within a democratic, multicultural India.

The federation urged the Centre to publicly uphold secularism as a foundational constitutional value and to curb statements that may erode national harmony. It also appealed to democratic and secular groups across the country to push back against what it sees as increasing efforts to redefine India through majoritarian ideology.

Reaffirming its commitment to Indigenous rights and constitutional principles, the NSF said any attempt to dilute India's secular character must be collectively resisted.

## 'One North East' Unity Rally in Agartala marks major push for regional solidarity

AGARTALA

The One North East Thansa (Unity) Rally held on Thursday at Astabal Ground in Agartala marked a significant moment in the region's political landscape as leaders from across the North East came together on a single platform to promote unity and collective progress.

This was the first major public event following the landmark joint press conference on November 4 in New Delhi, where regional leaders outlined their vision of forming a united political entity for the North East.

The rally witnessed a massive turnout, reflecting strong public support for the emerging regional alliance.

Among the prominent leaders present were Meghalaya Chief Minister and NPP National President Conrad K. Sangma; NPP Working President James P. K. Sangma; People's Party (Assam) Founder Daniel Langthasa; former Nagaland Minister and author Mmholnu-mo Kikon; senior Manipur leader RK Meghen; former Manipur Assembly Speaker Hemochandra Singh; and Indian Gorkha Janshakti Front President Ajoy Edwards.

Key TIPRA Motha leaders, including Founder Bubagra Pradyot Bikram Manikya, President B. K. Hrangkhawl,



TTAACD Chairman Jagadish Debbarma, CEM Purna Chandra Jamatia, and ministers Animesh Debbarma and Brishaketu Debbarma, also participated along with several MLAs, EMs and MDCs. Addressing the gathering, Meghalaya CM Conrad K. Sangma stressed the need for unity across the region. "It is time we come together as ONE, One North East. Our biggest challenge today is divisiveness within communities. From this stage, we must raise our voice and become ONE," he said.

TIPRA Motha Founder Bubagra Pradyot Bikram Manikya thanked the leaders who travelled from across the region and emphasised the importance

of collective effort. "A few years ago, we united the indigenous people of Tripura; today, we are taking a larger step by uniting the entire North East. This is only the beginning," he remarked. Other leaders echoed the message of regional solidarity, stressing that unity and a shared vision are essential to the region's socio-economic progress. They praised the collaborative leadership of Pradyot Bikram Manikya and Conrad Sangma in driving this historic initiative.

The rally concluded with a renewed call to strengthen regional identity and build a common path toward development and peace.

# Assam bags bronze for Swachh Pavilion at IITF 2025



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VOLUME:1, ISSUE 633

## Supreme Court Answers Presidential Reference

On April 8th this year, a two Judge Supreme Court Bench, invoking its powers under Article 142 of the Constitution, while deciding the case relating to accord of assent to Bills passed by Tamil Nadu Assembly had set a timeline for the Governor to act on the pending Bills and further directed that the President decide on the Bills reserved by the Governor for his consideration within three months. Further stating that SC's opinion under Article 143 could be sought for disposal of Bills so reserved. The Court held that Bills that remained pending would "deemed" to have been assented to when presented to the Governor after reconsideration by the State Legislature. No Bills could be reserved for President's consideration after its reconsideration by the State Legislature.

Article 142 empowers the Supreme Court to pass an order for doing complete justice in any matter pending before it. As per Article 141, a law declared by the Supreme Court is binding on all courts in the country. Article 144 further adds that all authorities, civil and judicial, shall act in the aid of the Supreme Court. Article 143 of the Constitution lays down that the President may consult the Supreme Court if at any time it appears to the President that a question of law or fact of public importance has arisen and it is expedient to obtain the opinion of the Supreme Court upon it, he may refer the question to the Supreme Court and the Court shall report to the President its opinion thereon. Taking recourse to this route, the Central Government in May this year made a Presidential Reference posing 14 queries to the Supreme Court instead of seeking a review of the impugned judgment of double bench in the Tamil Nadu case.

The Supreme Court answered the reference on 21st November broadly in the following terms: The Court has opined that as per Article 200, the Governor can either assent to the Bill, reserve it for consideration of the President, or withhold assent and return the Bill to the Legislature with comments; While exercising powers under Article 200 the Governor enjoys discretion and is not bound by the aid and advice of Council of Ministers; The discharge of Governor's functions under Article 200 is not justiciable. However, in glaring circumstances of indefinite inaction, the Court has limited powers to issue a mandamus to the Governor to decide within a reasonable period of time; It is not appropriate to impose timelines under Article 200; President's assent too is not justiciable; As per Article 201 the President cannot be bound by judicially prescribed timelines; The President is not required to seek SC's advice, whenever the Governor reserves a Bill for President's consideration. Subjective satisfaction of the President is sufficient; The decisions of the Governor and President under Articles 200 and 201 are not justiciable at a stage anterior to the law coming into force; The exercise of constitutional powers and orders by the President or Governor cannot be substituted in any manner under Article 142 nor does it allow for the concept of "deemed" assent of Bills; There is no question of a law made by a State Legislature coming into force without assent of Governor under Article 200; It has further been held that a Bill can be reserved for President's consideration even after it is received by the Governor after reconsideration by the State Legislature. Although to an ordinary person this looks to be a delaying tactic since reference to the President could well be made in the first stage itself. The two Judge Bench was largely driven to laying timelines due to delays on the part by Raj Bhavans in clearing Bills passed by the State Legislature thereby stifling the democratic functioning of the State Legislature. The objective of laying strict timelines by the double bench though well-intentioned overstepped its constitutional mandate. While seeking to remedy the constitutional impasse, it tweaked with 'separation of powers' which constitutes the basic structure of the Constitution. The opinion now rendered by the Supreme Court is balanced, in consonance with the provisions of the Constitution and strikes a conciliatory note. But it cannot be viewed as some kind of victory of Executive over Judiciary or Centre over States. If at all, it is reaffirmation of supremacy of Indian Constitution. Note has also to be taken that, in reply to 3rd query, the Supreme Court has said that in glaring circumstance of indefinite action, the Court has limited power to issue a mandamus to the Governor to decide within reasonable time period. This keeps a window open for Court's intervention in glaring cases of inaction on the part of Governors in future.

In the view of the author the opinion rendered by the Supreme Court to the Presidential Reference does not ipso-facto override the double Bench judgment. But the opinion will carry a great persuasive value as and when the Central Government files a review petition to overrule the impugned judgment.

### QUOTE OF THE DAY

I am grateful for what I am and have.  
My thanksgiving is perpetual.

- Henry David Thoreau

# POST BIHAR POLL DEBACLE: I.N.D.I.A BLOC AT THE CROSSROADS



ANIL ANAND

The outcome of the Bihar assembly elections has to be taken at its face-value till the time the accusers furnish clinching evidence to buttress their claims of "managed poll outcome". Nonetheless, the drubbing that the opposition 'Mahagathbandhan (MGB)' (I.N.D.I.A combine in the national context) has received in the state, in no way erases doubt in this context.

However, one thing is crystal clear that it has left the opposition alliance, whatever had been left of it before Bihar elections, in tatters. As it is, most of the regional satraps including Trinamool Congress chief Mamta Banerjee, Nationalist Congress Party (SCP) boss Sharad Pawar, Samajwadi Party head Akhilesh Yadav etc. have already been pulling in different directions. Congress, notwithstanding its own idiosyncrasies, has been their prime and persistent target, thereby creating an atmosphere filled with distrust.

Apart from the emphatic victory of the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA), the other clarity is about bleak future of opposition alliance in its present form. I.N.D.I.A bloc, which should have been gearing itself for the 2029 Lok Sabha elections enroute few more rounds of assembly elections in some important states such as West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, Kerala and Tamil Nadu, is finding itself on the crossroads.

Should the constituents, with overriding distrust, continue to drag the alliance, or go their own ways? Should the Congress, the only national party in the opposition camp, and the regional political parties chart their own course, till they meet again?

The opposition 'MGB's' decimation in Bihar should stir the opposition parties, particularly the Congress, into a process of self-introspection. The storm which has struck them in Bihar can blow them over again if they fail to identify their weaknesses, mostly self-inflicted, and initiate redemptive measures on a war-footing. Or else, all talk of stopping the Narendra Modi juggernaut, in all its manifestations, is absurd and sheer wastage of time.

#### NATIONAL CRISES:

From the opposition unity or existence point of view, near wash-out in the electorally significant Bihar definitely has serious ramifications at the national level. The MGB in the state was a localized alliance and it was formulated without the active involvement, if not electoral participation, of the broader I.N.D.I.A combine. The foundation for this impending crisis had been laid much before the Bihar polls with none of the alliance partners showing any interest to exhibit semblance of unity to counter

the rock like NDA.

While the NDA campaigned in Bihar like a cohesive unit, the MGB (the shade of I.N.D.I.A) failed to portray a united face. The Rashtriya Janata Dal's (RJD's) initial reluctance on seat-sharing and Congress's irrational demands and reservations to declare Tejashwi Yadav as chief ministerial candidate, followed by Leader of Opposition, Rahul Gandhi's lack of interest to conduct joint campaign with the former, and embarking on a fortnight long foreign visit in the midst of elections, made the task easier for the Modi-Nitish Kumar combine.

The outcome is for everyone to see and the crisis is staring the opposition bandwagon in the eyes more seriously than ever before. It has popped a new question-whether Congress, with its inability to deliver at crucial times such as Bihar assembly elections, could be a valuable ally or a liability? Vice versa, the same question mark is on the regional satraps who have, ever since the I.N.D.I.A combine came into being, been targeting Congress and Mr Gandhi in particular thereby giving an added advantage to the BJP.

There is no denying the fact that the Congress being a national party and a pivot around which the Opposition unity revolved, and its public face Mr Gandhi will be more in the deck than the regional parties and their leaders. Pragmatism demands that while it will be in order to question him and his party, entirely absolving the regional players could be fraught with further dangerous consequences for opposition unity and the national interest.

#### THE WAY FORWARD:

Given the prevailing dissections in the opposition camp with respective political parties such as Congress and RJD having their share of internal problems, to expect an immediate attempt at renewing unity efforts is like chasing a mirage. Should they chart on path to reconstruct opposition unity or let I.N.D.I.A collapse?

The answers to these questions will shape India's political landscape in the run up to the next general elections. It can, at present, be definitively said that the opposition-centric politics, to challenge the might of Mr Modi, has certainly entered a phase of profound uncertainty. It depends how Congress and regional satraps address this issue or simply prefer to wither away. The stakes are high and the time is clearly running out for them. Sooner they put their act together, the better it will be.

#### CONGRESS'S OUTLOOK:

The biggest question staring the party is whether the time has come for it to run solo? Or it can still give a try to weaving the opposition unity around it or a new formulation hemmed by the regional parties?

The answer to either of these questions

lies in the fact that if the Congress leadership (read Mr Gandhi) is in any mood to rejuvenate the organisation and remove its inherent weaknesses? Despite his repeated public assertions, even he has not shown any positive inclination towards this direction. Whether in alliance or going solo, either way organisational weaknesses will continue to prove Congress's nemesis. It is baffling why this basic aspect is being ignored at least by Mrs Sonia Gandhi.

First and foremost, the Grand Old Party (GOP) must gain strength through far-reaching organisational changes. It should involve getting rid of the deadwood, break the syndicate of the so-called tried and trusted veterans who are deft at sabotaging, infuse fresh blood and groom regional and community leaders. And last but not the least indulge in social engineering on the basis of the party's old model rather than the current approach of antagonising one at the cost of the other. This approach has considerably helped the BJP in strengthening its Hindutva forces. The idea should be to dent these forces and not to consolidate.

There is no doubt Mr Gandhi has rare qualities of head and heart. And his sincerity of purpose has been for everyone to see. These are rare qualities in the modern-day politics, but the present-day politics demands more. He will have to build an edifice using this foundation which is not enough in itself.

There is a serious crisis in the GOP due to lack of communication between the leaders and the rank and file. This malady has afflicted the AICC, starting from Mr Gandhi's level, down to the PCC levels. In fact there is no listening post such as the late Mr Ahmed Patel who used to burn mid-night oil listening and interacting with the party-persons. Much to their chagrin his successor K C Venugopal if has his hands "too full", he is handicapped by lack of communication skills. On top of that over-arching culture of arrogance, from top to bottom, has brought the GOP to the present pass.

The outcome of this opacity is that the vested interest has grown stronger. The leaders in the seat of power are whiling away their time knowing fully well that they are neither accountable nor answerable to anybody.

The redemption process should start with Mr Gandhi. Start better means of communication with party leaders and workers at the middle and lower rungs, throw your doors open to have direct feed back from the ground. More importantly, everyone in the AICC and the PCCs should be made accountable for their actions and not allowed a free run.

#### REGIONAL SATRAPTS:

Even the strong regional players such as Ms Banerjee, Mr Pawar or DMK chief, Mr Stalin, cannot afford to work in isolation as they run the higher risk, than ever before, of being muzzled by the Centre. The political ambitions of the Modi-Amit Shah duo in Kerala, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal are well known, so the enhanced risk of survival to the regional satraps in these states.

They must also come out of the self-professed ego-shells and act realistically for their own political survival and to ensure a strong opposition which is in the national interest.

### DIGITAL WAR OF WORDS

**With the spirited call of Vande Mataram and heartfelt salutations to Maa Bharti, we began our BJP Panchayat Election Campaign with renewed determination and a collective resolve to strengthen grassroots democracy in Tawang. ~ Pema Khandu, CM Arunachal Pradesh**  
**Voices echoed with "Bharat Mata ki Jai!" as BJP karyakartas, leaders, youth and well-wishers gathered with unwavering unity and dedication to serve our villages, our people, and our future. ~ Pema Khandu**



## Nationwide SIR | When a clean-up becomes a mess

PRAVEEN CHAKRAVARTY

A year ago, the idea of a massive nationwide exercise to visit every single household to verify, add, or delete voters was not on anyone's radar. After all, the Narendra Modi government did not even conduct the mandatory decadal census.

Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar took charge in February 2025 and, for three months, did not utter the term 'special intensive revision' (SIR). Suddenly, one day in June, the CEC announced a nationwide SIR beginning with Bihar. Why so suddenly and so hastily?

It all started after the 2024 Maharashtra election, when the Leader of the Opposition Rahul Gandhi and I demonstrated comprehensively how the election was stolen using fake voters. More voters were added in five months in Maharashtra than in the entire previous five-year period. And all these new voters seem to have magically voted only for the BJP alliance. This was proved with data and groundwork.

Further, Rahul Gandhi exposed similar voter-list frauds in other states. The Election Commission steadfastly refused to accept our demand for providing voter lists of all states in a machine-readable form for further analysis.

Public belief about faulty voter lists was rising and the EC's credibility was rapidly

falling. Clearly something was amiss, and hence the need to announce an SIR to clean the lists and wash past sins.

The last nationwide SIR took three full years, starting in 2002 and ending in January 2005. There were 700,000 polling stations and 65 crore voters then. India today has more than 100 crore voters and 12 lakh polling stations—a huge increase from 2005. Yet, CEC Gyanesh Kumar now wants to rush and finish the SIR process in a third of the time.

In SIR Phase 2, the EC wants 5.3 lakh booth-level officers (BLO) across nine states and three Union territories to visit crores of homes and enumerate, verify, add, or delete 51 crore voters in just a month! These BLOs have to distribute voter forms, help the vast majority of voters fill it, manually verify each voter's existence in the 2003 electoral rolls, collect the appropriate documentation for proof of age, citizenship, and residence, and then submit these forms.

Now, is there any surprise that five BLOs have lost their lives tragically due to stress and work pressure of SIR, including by suicide? The EC is culpable for these horrendous and utterly avoidable deaths of five Indians.

To be crystal clear, India's voter lists are riddled with ghosts, fakes, and duplicates, and need to be cleaned and purified. Voter lists are the Aadhaar or foundation of any democracy. India's democracy today stands

on a shaky foundation of flawed voter lists.

So, any exercise to clean the lists is welcome and much-needed. It is unwise to oppose list cleaning or even the idea of SIR.

But Gyanesh Kumar's SIR is a cure worse than the disease. There were absolutely no discussions, deliberation, consultation with political parties and the public before the launch of a nationwide SIR. This is in direct contrast to the SIR exercise in 2002, when the EC held joint discussions with all parties and gave enough notice before launching the SIR.

This rush to launch SIR has left all political parties, BLOs, and voters unprepared. Consequently, there is utter chaos among voters, extremely stressed EC workers, and agitated political parties.

The Supreme Court now must stop this chaotic and messy SIR exercise and first ask the EC to prepare a comprehensive process document for voter list cleaning in consultation with all political parties.

In the interim, the EC can use Aadhaar as a tool to eliminate duplicates and fake voters. It is true that Aadhaar does not imply citizenship and only Indian citizens must be allowed to vote. Every Aadhaar holder need not be a voter, but every voter must have an Aadhaar.

So, even without an elaborate SIR, Aadhaar can be used to eliminate a vast chunk of the current problem by asking every voter

to link their Aadhaar with their voter ID. This is a simple and established process.

Yes, there is a Supreme Court ruling that prohibits the EC from making Aadhaar mandatory for voters. But guess what? The EC already has made Aadhaar mandatory for revision of voter details.

If one wants to change their address or any other information in their voter ID, then a Form 8 needs to be submitted with the desired change which will be verified using the person's Aadhaar details and a one-time password sent to the Aadhaar-linked mobile number. So, if a person has not linked their voter ID with Aadhaar, they cannot change any details. In other words, the EC has already surreptitiously made Aadhaar mandatory for voter ID modification. Then why not link all voter IDs to Aadhaar and use it to remove fake and duplicate ones? Regardless of their views in the past, nearly all political parties now support using Aadhaar to clean voter lists.

The current SIR process is an effort to cover past mistakes in the voter list than to clean. Hence the haste and ensuing chaos resulting in tragic deaths of innocent people, erosion of public trust in the EC, and utter lack of faith in elections by opposition parties. It runs the risk of collapsing the very edifice of India's democracy. The Supreme Court must step in and ask Gyanesh Kumar: why this 'kola-hurry da'?

# Protecting integrity of vote is first duty of any constitutional authority: Gaurav Gogoi raises 4 key demands before EC

JORHAT

Assam Congress President and MP Gaurav Gogoi has urged the Election Commission of India (ECI) to immediately adopt modern, digitally secure voter roll systems, asserting that protecting the integrity of the vote is the Commission's foremost "constitutional responsibility".

In a post on X, Gogoi said he had placed four key demands before the poll body during a press conference in Jorhat earlier in the day.

"At a press conference in Jorhat today, I raised four key demands before the Election Commission of India. First, the immediate rollout of machine-readable electoral rolls for all upcoming elections. Second, complete digitisation and centrally managed, software-based

preparation of voter lists to eliminate manual vulnerabilities. Third, public disclosure of any technical or administrative limitations that are preventing the adoption of modern, secure voter roll formats. Fourth, a strict and transparent audit trail for every addition, deletion, or modification made after the draft rolls are published," he wrote on Thursday.

"Protecting the integrity of the vote is the first duty of any constitutional authority. Merely reading the Preamble inside the Central Hall is meaningless if we cannot guarantee that every vote cast belongs to a genuine citizen," Gogoi further wrote on X.

Earlier on Thursday, Assam Congress President and MP Gaurav Gogoi launched a sharp attack on Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, alleging

that the state government is misusing the SIR process to manipulate the voter base ahead of the upcoming elections.

Speaking with media, Gogoi claimed that the Chief Minister is "trying to bring trainloads of BJP workers into Assam from other states and get their names registered in the voters' list." He said such attempts were aimed at "reducing the strength of the Assamese vote." The Congress leader urged the Election Commission to take the issue seriously and ensure transparency in the electoral process. "In the upcoming elections, the EC must be serious," he said, adding that Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar must explain "why they don't have a machine-readable voter list."

"Gogoi alleged that the lack of such a system leaves scope for manipulation

and undermines public trust in the electoral process. He called on the EC to clarify its position and ensure corrective measures before the polls.

The Assam Congress has consistently questioned the SIR process, accusing the state government of using it to alter the demographic and political equations. Currently, a nationwide SIR is underway in 12 states and union territories, including West Bengal, with the final electors' list to be published on February 7. The first phase of SIR was completed in Bihar ahead of the state's Assembly elections.

The states and union territories are the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Lakshadweep, Chhattisgarh, Goa, Gujarat, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Puducherry, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal.

# Tripura farmers receive Rs 900 crore under PM-Kisan scheme

AGARTALA

Nearly 2.5 lakh farmers in Tripura have received a cumulative Rs 900 crore under the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-Kisan) scheme since its launch, Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Minister Ratan Lal Nath said on Thursday.

Speaking at the inaugural ceremony of the state-level orange festival, Nath said the 21st instalment of the scheme was recently disbursed to beneficiaries across the state. "A total of Rs 900 crore has been transferred directly to the bank accounts of 2.5 lakh farmers in Tripura since the scheme began," he said.

The minister said agriculture remains the backbone of the state's economy, contributing 46 per cent of total revenue. "Agriculture is our primary sector. Tourism and business jointly contribute 41 per cent,

and the remaining 13 per cent is generated from industries. This is why agriculture, power generation, and forests remain our core focus areas," he added.

Highlighting developments in the farm sector, Nath said Tripura's farmers are producing high-quality oranges, citrus fruits, onions, and apical root-cutting varieties of potato.

He said orange cultivation has significantly expanded across districts in recent years.

Nath also said Tripura has registered notable progress in meeting sustainable development goals.

"We have surpassed 17 states in SDG performance. In seven years of BJP governance in this small state, the results of our efforts are being nationally recognised. NITI Aayog has also appreciated the state's achievements," he said.

## INTACH Opens Lunglei Chapter, Mizoram's Second Heritage Unit

KRC TIMES NEWS DESK

LUNGLEI: Lunglei saw a major push for heritage preservation today as Mizoram's Art and Culture Minister C. Lalsawivunga inaugurated the Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH) Lunglei Chapter at the Lunglei Convention Centre. This is the second INTACH chapter in the state. The minister welcomed the initiative and said the new chapter will play a key role in protecting the cultural heritage, traditions and historical sites of Lunglei district and southern Mizoram. He pointed to INTACH's ongoing efforts in safeguarding the 81 State Protected Monuments under the Mizoram Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 2001. He also recalled INTACH's role in helping sites like Kawthchuh Ropui, Ralven Puk and Lungphun Ropui gain recognition as Monuments of National Importance under the Archaeological Survey of India.

Lalsawivunga spoke about the State Government's work to trace Mizo historical origins through the newly formed Nham Tobul Zawn Chhuah Committee. He encouraged the Lunglei Chapter to collaborate closely with the government to protect heritage sites and strengthen cultural awareness among young people.

Rev. Dr F. Sangvela, the chapter's convener, delivered the welcome address. INTACH Mizoram Chapter Member Secretary Lalramthanga also spoke at the event. Chapter Secretary JC Vanlal Hmuaka presented a report on the establishment of the unit and its future plans, noting that it already has 40 members.

The programme was attended by Lunglei West MLA T. Lalhlipmua, officials and members of INTACH from Aizawl and Lunglei, government officials and students from Government Leitangpui High School and Government Electric Veng High School. Cultural performances were presented by the Mizo Cultural Artists Association Sub-Headquarters, Lunglei, and Executive Committee Member C. Lalhmimguana delivered the vote of thanks.

## Panel Explores Rise of New North-East Cinema at IFFI Goa



KRC TIMES NEWS DESK

GOA: A panel discussion on New North-East Cinema and Film Schools drew an engaged audience on Thursday at the Kala Academy Auditorium on the eighth day of the 56th International Film Festival of India in Goa.

Veteran Manipuri filmmaker Haobam Paban Kumar looked back on his early struggles in the 1990s, when formal film education was out of reach for most young filmmakers from the region. With only two major institutions available at the time—FTII in Pune and SRFTI in

Kolkata—he said competition was fierce and opportunities were scarce, especially for students from the North-East.

The session was moderated by filmmaker Dominic Sangma and brought together prominent voices shaping the region's contemporary cinema. Along with Haobam Paban Kumar, the panel featured Assamese filmmaker Reema Borah and Mahrishi Tuhin Kashyap.

The discussion ranged from the steady growth of North-East cinema to the expanding role of film schools in developing new talent. Panelists spoke about the changing creative environment, the increasing visibility of regional stories and the need for stronger training platforms to support emerging filmmakers.

## MP Parimal Suklabaidya launches development projects worth Rs 50 lakh in Silchar

OUR CORRESPONDENT

SILCHAR: Silchar MP Parimal Suklabaidya on Thursday laid the foundation stones for five development projects across the Silchar Assembly constituency. All five are funded through a combined allocation of Rs 50 lakh from the MP Local Area Development Fund.

He began at Arun Kumar Chanda Law College, where he inaugurated the construction of an extended building sanctioned at Rs 10 lakh. From there, he moved to Tarapur Nathpara to lay the foundation stone for a boundary wall at Nath Hostel, also approved at Rs 10 lakh.

At Tarapur Sarbajanin Durga Mandap, he launched the construction of a cultural building with another Rs 10 lakh. Later, he inaugurated the community hall project at Meherpur Naga Colony,



dedicated to Rani Gaidinliu, with a similar allocation. The day ended at Silchar

Hungoor Ram Mandir Dharamshala, where he laid the foundation stone for a

new building, funded with the remaining Rs 10 lakh.

During the visits, Suklabaidya spoke about ongoing development work undertaken by the BJP-led governments at the Centre and in the State. He directed officials to ensure proper quality checks and timely completion.

The programmes were attended by departmental officials and BJP leaders, including Hiralak Choudhury, president of the Madhyashahar Mandal; Dulal Das, president of the New Silchar Mandal; Jhalak Chakraborty, vice-president of the Cachar district unit; Shashanka Chandra Paul, MP representative from Dholai; Krishna Jeevan Debnath, treasurer of the Assam State OBC Morcha; Gopal Kanti Roy, general secretary; Sumona Das, secretary; along with other local leaders and residents.

## NSCW counsel flags repeated delays in case against IAS officer Reny Wilfred

KRC TIMES NEWS DESK

KOHIMA: The lawyer representing the Nagaland State Commission for Women voiced concern on Monday over what she described as repeated attempts by IAS officer Reny Wilfred's legal team to delay proceedings in the Kohima Bench of the Gauhati High Court.

Speaking to reporters after the hearing, advocate Vrinda Grover said that on every date fixed for arguments, Wilfred's counsel sought an adjournment despite being informed in advance of her appearance. She said these repeated requests were slowing down a matter that is ready to be argued.

Grover said such tactics often aim to exhaust parties and lawyers. She added that neither she nor the commission would step back simply because adjournments are being sought. According to her, all replies

and responses from the commission are already on record.

The court noted on Monday that pleadings are almost complete and directed the petitioner to ensure the presence of an arguing counsel on the next date. The case will be heard again on December 9.

Grover appeared on behalf of the NSCW and its three members, who have been impleaded in the matter. She termed their impleadment unusual and described it as an attempt to pressure the women involved as well as the commission.

She also said the High Court has already made it clear that there is no stay on the trial. The trial court is scheduled to take up the case on November 26 for steps leading to the framing of charges. Once charges are framed, arguments will be presented by the prosecution, the victims' counsel if any, and the defence, after

which the trial will begin.

Grover said delays in such cases often work in favour of the accused and can deter women from giving testimony. She stressed the need for a speedy trial and said the commission would push for the matter to proceed in line with laws meant to secure justice for women.

The chargesheet, filed in June, contains statements from around ten women, recorded both by the police and by a magistrate. The charges invoke Sections 74, 75 and 79 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023, and Section 3(1) of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989. According to Grover, the statements point to a pattern of misconduct and an abuse of authority.

Wilfred, a 2015-batch IAS officer, is currently under suspension. He moved the High Court seeking to

quash the FIR and complaint filed by the NSCW alleging sexual harassment during his tenure as Joint Secretary of the Investment and Development Authority of Nagaland (IDAN). He has also filed a petition seeking to quash the chargesheet.

Earlier, the High Court had granted additional time to both sides in the ongoing case. In an order issued on October 7, Justice Rajesh Mazumdar allowed Wilfred to file a rejoinder affidavit and permitted the respondents to file an additional affidavit-in-opposition if required. The court noted that the petitioner had also sought time on May 22 and July 22.

The court reiterated that the prayer for stay of investigation had become infructuous after the chargesheet was filed and clarified that no stay is in place on the trial court proceedings.

## Security Forces Uproot Over 100 Acres of Illegal Poppy Farms in Manipur



IMPHAL

Security forces in Manipur, in joint action with state agencies, have destroyed more than 100 acres of illegal poppy cultivation across Senapati and Kangpokpi districts, intensifying the state's ongoing crackdown on narcotics production.

The coordinated operations were carried out on November 27, officials said. In Senapati district, a joint team of security forces and the Forest Department cleared roughly six acres of poppy fields in the Ngamju hill range under Purl Police Station.

A parallel operation unfolded across the Koubru hill range and adjoining pockets under Kangpokpi Police Station in Kangpokpi district. Supported by the Forest

Department and the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB), the security team obliterated nearly 103 acres of illegal plantations - one of the largest single-day crackdowns in recent months.

Teams also dismantled 30 makeshift huts used by cultivators and recovered fertilisers, herbicides, salt bags, and assorted farming tools from the sites. All seized items were destroyed on the spot to prevent replantation.

Officials said the operations were part of ongoing efforts to curb the expansion of illicit poppy cultivation in Manipur's hill districts. Security agencies have stepped up surveillance and pledged sustained action in remote and vulnerable areas to clamp down on the drug production network.

## Sikkim's Radhika Chettri to represent India at WorldSkills Asia 2025

GANGTOK

Radhika Chettri, a student of Emergency Medical Technology (EMT) at Medhavi Skills University (MSU) in Sikkim, has secured a place on Team India for the WorldSkills Asia 2025 competition, scheduled from November 27 to 29 in Chinese Taipei.

She enters the international arena after winning a Silver Medal in Health & Social Care at IndiaSkills 2024, marking Sikkim's first medal at the national competition and establishing MSU as India's youngest university to win at IndiaSkills 2024.

This is the first time a student from Sikkim or the northeast will represent India in the Health & Social Care category at WorldSkills Asia.

MSU's School of Health Sciences & Technology faculty prepared her through rigorous, hands-on training.

WorldSkills Asia is a platform

Quest!

Poor eyesight (myopia) is associated with higher IQ.



for demonstrating technical expertise, innovation, and vocational skills, bringing together top professionals from across the continent. The competition is often regarded as the "Olympics of Skills," where

only national champions participate.

Representing India at the global forum reflects her training and preparation. Radhika's selection places Sikkim and MSU on the international skills map.

Jayant Chaudhary, Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Skill Development & Entrepreneurship and MoS Education, Government of India, recently flagged off India's first contingent for WorldSkills Asia 2025.

Senior officials, including Debashree Mukherjee, Secretary, MSDE, and actor Sudesh Berry, attended the ceremony, which introduced 23 young champions representing India across 21 skill categories, marking India's debut at WorldSkills Asia. Radhika underwent training at Vidyanta Skills Institute under the guidance of Robia Chako and Jaideep Herbert, Indian Expert for Health & Social Care at WorldSkills International.

Her preparation included simulation-based training, critical-care scenarios, and hands-on practice at Vidyanta Skills Institute and Medanta Hospital in Gurugram.

Radhika said, "Representing India at WorldSkills Asia is a milestone I'm truly honoured to achieve.

With the support of MSU, my mentors, and my family, I am preparing with full dedication to make my state and my country proud."

Pravesh Dudani, Founder & Chancellor, MSU, stated, "Radhika embodies the grit, skill, and excellence that define Medhavi. Her accomplishment is a proud moment for MSU, Sikkim, and the entire northeast. We are confident that she will shine at WorldSkills Asia."

Kuldip Sharma, Co-Founder & Pro-Chancellor, remarked, "Radhika's rise from Sikkim to an international platform demonstrates the transformative impact of strong, skill-based education. This is the future of India's workforce."

Ashwini Sharma, Pro Vice-Chancellor, added, "Radhika has consistently shown discipline, dedication, and an exceptional command over practical, hands-on skills, the true foundation of excellence in healthcare. Her achievement reflects the strength of applied learning at MSU."

As Radhika participates in WorldSkills Asia, she represents Sikkim, MSU, and India's growing focus on skill-based education.

Her participation highlights practical skills development and career readiness.

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## 'Big conspiracy' against people: Akhilesh Yadav on SIR exercise

### LUCKNOW:

SP president Akhilesh Yadav has made a fresh attack on the Election Commission's Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, saying it was a "big conspiracy" against the people of the country that could push citizens into a state "worse than the colonial era."

Posting a 20-second video on the SIR process on his official X handle on Thursday evening, Yadav

appealed to all opposition parties, including allies of the ruling National Democratic Alliance (NDA), to "unite and expose this mega-conspiracy of the BJP."

Attacking the roll revision exercise, he charged, "This is a fraud with democracy. People must stay alert."

Today votes are being cut, tomorrow names will be removed from land records, ration cards, caste certificates, reservations,

and later even from bank accounts and lockers of the middle-class."

In a detailed post, the SP chief said, "This is a major conspiracy against the people of this country which will lead to a situation far worse than the colonial era."

This is the time to wake up and protect every single vote."

The former Uttar Pradesh chief minister warned that parties currently supporting the BJP would be the "first to be finished," and called on citizens to "drop everything and stop the fraud taking place under SIR."

Accusing the BJP, its allies, the state government, and "some corrupt officials in the Election Commission" of attempting to take over the entire electoral system, Yadav said, "Let us unite to save the country from the open loot by BJP leaders and their allies, and to save our identity represented through our vote. Otherwise, tomorrow they will declare themselves as outsiders."

The SIR exercise is underway in nine states and three Union territories.

The Election Commission (EC) said its booth-level officers (BLOs) have fanned out to hand over semi-filled enumeration forms to electors and will also help them fill the required document.

## Will PM Modi take up South Africa's cause with 'good friend' Trump: Congress



### NEW DELHI

With US President Donald Trump announcing that he is barring South Africa from participating in next year's G20 summit in Miami, the Congress on Friday said Prime Minister Narendra Modi is the

"self-proclaimed champion" of both Africa and the Global South and asked whether he will take up South Africa's cause with his "good friend".

Trump said Wednesday that he is barring South Africa from par-

ticipating in the Group of 20 summit next year in Miami and will "stop all payments and subsidies" to the country over its treatment of a US government representative at this year's global meeting.

Reacting to the development, Congress general secretary in-charge communications Jairam Ramesh said South Africa has been in the G20 from the very beginning simply because it is the largest economy measured by size of GDP in the African continent.

"It is not there because the US

is doing it some favour. It was very much present at the very first G20 Summit held in Washington DC that was chaired by President George W.

Bush and has been a valued presence in all subsequent G20 Summits," Ramesh said on X.

Noting that South Africa and India share a special relationship, the Congress leader said they are part of the original BRICS group also involving Brazil, Russia, and China.

They are also part of IBSA along

with Brazil and of BASIC as well along with Brazil and China, he said.

"It has often been remarked that an Indian lawyer went to South Africa in the late 19th century and returned home as a revolutionary in the early years of the 20th century to lead India's independence movement," Ramesh said, referring to Mahatma Gandhi.

India was in the forefront in the global campaign against apartheid in South Africa for decades and fought hard for its decolonisation, he pointed out and added Nelson Mandela is an iconic figure to Indians as well.

"The Prime Minister is the self-proclaimed champion of both Africa and the Global South. Will he take up South Africa's cause with his good friend and ensure that it will get to attend the next G20 Summit - as it is perfectly entitled to?" Ramesh said.

Trump chose not to have an American delegation attend the recent summit hosted by South Africa, saying he did so because white Afrikaners were being violently persecuted -- a claim that South Africa rejected as baseless.

The Republican president, in a social media post, said South Africa had refused to hand over its G20 hosting responsibilities to a senior representative of the US Embassy when the summit ended over the weekend.

"Therefore, at my direction, South Africa will NOT be receiving an invitation to the 2026 G20, which will be hosted in the Great City of Miami, Florida next year," Trump posted on Truth Social.

"South Africa has demonstrated to the World they are not a country worthy of Membership anywhere," he said, adding, "and we are going to stop all payments and subsidies to them, effective immediately."

## INTERNATIONAL

### Hong Kong firefighters make final search for survivors after apartment tower blaze kills 94

#### HONG KONG

Hong Kong firefighters combed through a high-rise apartment complex apartment-by-apartment Friday in a final attempt to find anyone alive after a massive fire engulfed seven of eight towers, killing at least 94 people in one of the city's deadliest blazes.

Crews were prioritizing apartments from which they received more than two dozen calls for assistance during the blaze but were unable to reach, Derek Armstrong Chan, a deputy director of Hong Kong Fire Services told reporters early Friday morning.

"Our firefighting operation is almost complete," he said.

The fire started midafternoon Wednesday in one of the Wang Fuk Court complex's eight towers, jumping rapidly from one to the next as bamboo scaffolding covered in netting in place for renovations caught ablaze until seven buildings were engulfed.

It took more than 1,000 firefighters some 24 hours to bring the five-alarm blaze under control, and even nearly two days later, smoke continued to drift out of the charred skeletons of the buildings from the occasional flare-up.

The final search of the buildings was expected to be completed later Friday at which point officials have said they will officially end the rescue phase of their operation at the complex in Tai Po district, a northern suburb near Hong Kong's border with mainland China.

It was unclear how many people could possibly be inside the buildings, which had almost 2,000 apartments and some 4,800 residents. Hong Kong leader John Lee said early Thursday morning that officials had not been able to make contact with 279 residents.

"We will endeavor to force entry into all the units of the seven blocks concerned so as to ensure that there



is no other possible casualties," Chan said.

He said an updated figure on the number of missing people cannot be calculated until the search and rescue operation is complete.

The apartments from which a total of 25 unanswered rescue calls were received, which are being prioritized, were primarily on higher floors, where the fire was last to be extinguished, he said.

More than 70 people were injured in the blaze, including 11 firefighters, and about 900 people were housed in temporary shelters.

Most of the casualties were in the first two buildings to catch fire, Chan said.

The apartment complex housed many older people. It was built in the

1980s and had been undergoing a major renovation. Hong Kong's anti-corruption agency said on Thursday it was investigating possible corruption relating to the renovation project.

Three men, the directors and an engineering consultant of a construction company, have been arrested on suspicion of manslaughter, and police said company leaders were suspected of gross negligence.

Police have not identified the company where the suspects worked, but The Associated Press confirmed Prestige Construction & Engineering Company was in charge of renovations in the tower complex. Police have seized boxes of documents from the company, where phones rang unanswered Thursday.

Authorities suspected some

materials on the exterior walls of the high-rise buildings did not meet fire resistance standards, allowing the unusually fast spread of the fire.

Police also said they found plastic foam panels — which are highly flammable — attached to the windows on each floor near the elevator lobby of the one unaffected tower. The panels were believed to have been installed by the construction company but the purpose was not clear.

Authorities planned immediate inspections of housing estates undergoing major renovations to ensure scaffolding and construction materials meet safety standards.

The fire was the deadliest in Hong Kong in decades. A 1996 fire in a commercial building in Kowloon killed 41 people.

### Trump vows 'permanent pause' on migration from 'Third World' nations after killing by Afghan migrant

#### WASHINGTON

US President Donald Trump said Friday he planned to suspend migration from what he called "third world countries" and deport foreign nationals who are a "security risk" as his administration intensified crackdown on immigration in the wake of the killing of a National Guard member by an Afghan national.

The Trump administration said it will conduct a "rigorous" re-examination of all Green Cards issued to immigrants from "every country of concern."

The new guidance came in the wake of the tragic shooting of US Army Specialist Sarah Beckstrom, 20, and US Air Force Staff Sgt. Andrew Wolfe, 24 by Afghan national Rahmanullah Lakanwal.

"Even as we have progressed technologically, Immigration Policy has eroded those gains and living conditions for many. I will permanently pause migration from all Third World Countries to allow the US system to fully recover, terminate all of the millions of Biden illegal admissions, including those signed by Sleepy Joe Biden's Autopen, and remove anyone who is not a net asset to the United States, or is incapable of loving our Country," Trump said in a post on Truth Social.

He said he would end all federal benefits and subsidies to noncitizens in the country, denaturalize migrants who undermine domestic tranquility, and deport any Foreign National who is a public charge, security risk, or non-compatible with Western Civilization.

Trump asserted that these goals will be pursued with the aim of achieving a major reduction in illegal and disruptive populations, including those admitted through an unauthorised and illegal Autopen approval process?.

"Only REVERSE MIGRATION can fully cure this situation. Other than that, HAPPY THANKSGIVING TO ALL, except those that hate, steal, murder, and destroy everything that America stands for - You won't be here for long!" he said.

Trump announced on Thursday during a call with service members on Thanksgiving that Beckstrom had died of her injuries. Wolfe remained in critical condition.

Lakanwal, 29, had arrived in the US through a Biden-era immigration programme called 'Operation Allies Welcome' for Afghan nationals fleeing their country after the August 2021 Taliban takeover.

In another post, Trump lashed out at those who he said have allowed the country to be impacted by immigration policies.

"A very Happy Thanksgiving salutation to all of our Great American Citizens and Patriots who have been so nice in allowing our Country to be divided, disrupted, carved up, murdered, beaten, mugged, and laughed at, along with certain other foolish countries throughout the World, for being 'Politically Correct,' and just plain STUPID, when it comes to Immigration."

Trump said the official United States foreign population stands at 53 million people, most of which are on welfare, from failed nations, or from prisons, mental institutions, gangs, or drug cartels.

"They and their children are supported through massive payments from Patriotic American Citizens who, because of their beautiful hearts, do not want to openly complain or cause trouble in any way, shape, or form. They put up with what has happened to our Country, but it's eating them alive to do so!"

He said a migrant earning USD 30,000 with a Green Card will get roughly USD 50,000 in yearly benefits for their family.

"The real migrant population is much higher. This refugee burden is the leading cause of social dysfunction in America, something that did not exist after World War II (Failed schools, high crime, urban decay, overcrowded hospitals, housing shortages, and large deficits, etc.).

He also said that hundreds of thousands of refugees from Somalia are "completely taking over" the state of Minnesota.

Trump also slammed Congresswoman Ilhan Omar, saying she is "always wrapped in her swaddling hijab, and who probably came into the USA illegally in that you are not allowed to marry your brother, does nothing but hatefully complain about our Country, its Constitution, and how 'badly' she is treated."

Trump also posted a photo of hundreds of Afghan nationals huddled in an American military plane and brought to the US under the Biden administration in the wake of Taliban takeover in 2021.

"This is part of the horrendous airlift from Afghanistan. Hundreds of thousands of people poured into our Country totally unvetted and unchecked. We will fix it, but will never forget what Crooked Joe Biden and his Thugs did to our Country!"

US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) Director Joseph E. Ellow said that at President Trump's direction, he has "directed a full scale, rigorous re-examination of every Green Card for every alien from every country of concern."

"The protection of this country and of the American people remains paramount, and the American people will not bear the cost of the prior administration's reckless resettlement policies," Ellow said in a post on X.

The policy guidance is effective immediately and applies to requests pending or filed on or after November 27, 2025.

In a statement, the USCIS said the agency has issued new guidance allowing for "negative, country-specific factors" to be considered when vetting aliens from 19 high-risk countries.

These countries are Afghanistan, Myanmar, Burundi, Chad, Republic of the Congo, Cuba, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Haiti, Iran, Laos, Libya, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, Togo, Turkmenistan, Venezuela and Yemen.

## Goa Tantra Retreat Cancelled After Public Outcry; Meghalaya BJP MLA Flags Concerns To Chief Minister



Alexander Laloo Hek, MLA  
Chairman  
State Government Programme  
Implementation & Monitoring  
Committee (SGPI&MC)  
Meghalaya, Shillong

Mobile No. : 97740 03383  
94361 03383  
Office No. : 0364-2226401  
Email : me\_baai@yahoo.com

No. 1/ALH/CH/SGPI&MC/2025/14  
Dated: Shillong, the 27<sup>th</sup> November, 2025.

To,  
Dr. Pramod Pandurang Sawant,  
The Hon'ble Chief Minister of Goa,  
Government of Goa.

Sub: Concerns regarding the controversial "Tales of Kamasutra and Christmas Celebration" event in Goa.

Respected Sir,

With reference to the subject cited above, with my deepest concern, I am writing this letter to you which has come to my knowledge through an advertisement in the social platform in the name of Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh Foundation in Goa about the event where the content shows obscene and vulgar image in the "Tales of Kamasutra & Christmas Celebration" which is not acceptable in the society and particularly in Christian Community (Copy of the poster is enclosed herewith).

Therefore, my humble appeal and request you verify and find out the facts of the content mentioned above, whether it is authentic or not and if found true action should be taken and punish as per law to those organisers involved.

Your prompt and necessary action in this regard is highly appreciated and obliged.

Enclosed: As stated above.

Thanking you,

Shri. Alexander Laloo Hek, MLA  
Chairman  
State Government Programme  
Implementation & Monitoring Committee (SGPI&MC)  
Meghalaya, Shillong,  
and also National Executive Member of the BJP.

**KRC TIMES NEWS DESK**

**GOA/SHILLONG:** A Christmas-week tantra retreat in Goa, promoted with explicit themes and references to both Kamasutra and Christmas, has been cancelled after widespread protests and formal complaints from multiple quarters, including a senior BJP leader from Meghalaya.

The retreat, priced at Rs 24,995 and organised by the Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh Foundation, was scheduled for December 25 to 28. Its promotional posters promised sessions such as "Tantric Energy of Intimacy", "Blind Touch Dance" and "Cosmic Orgasm", blending sexual references with Christmas imagery. Once the poster went viral on social media, it drew immediate criticism, with many users accusing the organisers of trying to market Goa as a sex tourism hub.

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vulgar and disrespectful. Activist Arun Pandey of Arz approached the Goa Crime Branch, alleging misuse of Osho's name and deliberate provocation. The Catholic Association of Goa also filed a complaint, arguing that the retreat hurt religious sentiments and promoted obscenity. Archbishop Filipe Neri Cardinal Ferrao condemned the advertisement and urged the organisers to withdraw it.

Goa Police moved quickly once the issue gained momentum. Officers instructed the organisers to cancel the event and delete all promotional material from social media. Police stations across the state were told to monitor holiday-season events more closely. The controversy also reached neighbouring Meghalaya. Shri Alexander Laloo Hek, MLA and Chairman of the State Government Programme Implementation and Monitoring Committee (SGPI&MC), wrote to Goa Chief Minister Pramod Sawant after the poster came to his notice online. In his letter, Hek called the imagery objectionable and said such content was unacceptable, particularly for the Christian community. He asked the Goa government to verify the authenticity of the event and take action against the organisers if the details were found to be true.

Swami Dhyhan Sumit, the facilitator of the retreat and founder of the Osho Ladhiana Meditation Society, later apologised, saying the programme was meant to be spir-

**BHAGWAN SHREE RAJNEESH FOUNDATION  
NOW IN GOA**  
PRESENTS

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Tantra Taste Meditation  
Midnight Session  
Tantra Dance  
Mahamudra Meditation  
Tantra Blind Touch Dance

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Cosmic Orgasm | Tantric Love  
Freedom From S+  
S+ to Superconscious  
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&  
Christmas Celebration**

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Facilitator:  
**Swami Dhyhan Sumit**  
Founder  
Osho Ladhiana Meditation Society  
Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh Foundation

itual and had been misunderstood. He said the controversy erupted because the words "Kamasutra" and "Christmas" appeared too close together on the poster. Goa has seen similar disputes in the past over events that blur the line between wellness promotion and erotic marketing. This year's controversy follows a familiar pattern of viral posters, community outrage and eventual administrative intervention. With the retreat now cancelled and the posters withdrawn, the focus shifts to the broader conversation around religious sensitivity, spiritual branding and the boundaries of event promotion in India's tourism hotspots.

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# THE IMPORTANCE OF DADGIRI



The flag-off of the majestic NEIR-2026 from Dadgiri, which sits on the Indian side of the border, a small market town in Assam's Chirang district, will be held on the 10th of January. Walk a few steps past its shops, dust, and chatter, and you hit the checkpoint that leads to Gelephu in Bhutan. The two towns face each other like neighbours who share a gate instead of a wall. Their rhythms differ, their cultures differ, but their lives are linked in ways borders can't fully contain.

## A Border That Feels More Like a Threshold

Most borders carry tension. Dadgiri-Gelephu carries flow. You see it in the morning rush, when workers from the Indian side head toward Bhutan for daily labour, and Bhutanese families walk the other way to shop for vegetables, hardware, or Indian-made clothes. The border gate swings open at fixed hours, but the social exchange never really stops.

Here's the thing. This isn't a harsh checkpoint. It's a living seam. You feel the shift the moment you cross. Dadgiri is loud and unfiltered. Vendors call out to customers. Tea stalls spill onto the road. Trucks line up to carry essential goods to Bhutan.

Gelephu sits right across the line in a kind of gentle order. Clean streets. Quiet storefronts. Wide tree-lined stretches. It's Bhutan's pace—slower, softer, measured without losing its warmth.

And that contrast is what makes this border so compelling.

## A Town Built on Trade, Trust, and Mutual Need

Dadgiri exists because of Gelephu. Gelephu thrives in part because Dadgiri is there. One supplies the noise and the market muscle. The other sustains the demand with steady, predictable footfall.

Every morning, Dadgiri's market wakes up early so Bhutanese buyers can cross over before the sun gets too strong. They come for spices, lentils, rice, cheap electronics, textiles, and everyday kitchen supplies. Indian traders know exactly what the Bhutanese households prefer and adjust their inventory accordingly.

On the flip side, people from Dadgiri and nearby villages

depend on Gelephu for work. Bhutan's wages are higher and the work culture is more structured. If you talk to labourers waiting near the gate, they'll tell you that the job security in Gelephu makes their daily border crossing worth it.

The trade isn't just formal. It's human. Shopkeepers know customers by face. Officers at the checkpoint recognise regular commuters. It's a cross-border relationship built on decades of familiarity.

## Where Bhutan's New Vision Meets India's Old Market

Gelephu has been getting more attention lately. Bhutan plans to transform it into a major economic hub, anchored in green development and designed to link the kingdom more closely with South Asia. There's

talk of expanded infrastructure, special economic zones, and new connectivity projects.

If those plans unfold fully, Dadgiri will feel the change first. The border may stay the same, but the flow of people, goods, and opportunities will multiply. It could mean better roads on the Indian side, more logistics businesses, more labour demand, and stronger cultural exchange.

What makes this interesting is how quietly the region is preparing for it. Traders in Dadgiri speak about "the big Bhutan project" in practical terms. They know it could raise competition, increase movement, and shift prices. They also know the region has the chance to become an important gateway, not just a small border town.

## A Meeting Point of Two Worlds

The contrast between Dadgiri and Gelephu isn't jarring. It's fascinating.

Dadgiri feels grounded in the soil of Assam. Bamboo stalls. Fish vendors. Motorbikes weaving through crowds. The smell of frying pakoras. Loud bargaining. A kind of lived chaos that you can't script.

Gelephu feels curated. Clean roads. Neatly maintained shops. Houses with the signature Bhutanese architecture—sloping roofs, carved wooden edges, colours that blend more than clash. Even the traffic feels choreographed. You don't hear horns. You don't see the same scramble for space.

Standing at the border, you realise you're looking at two systems, two philosophies, two moods of life separated by a few metres.

Dadgiri embraces spontaneity.

Gelephu embraces order. And people move between them with a comfort that defies geopolitical theory.

## A Border Where Culture Doesn't Need Passports

Spend a bit of time here and you notice cultural blending that doesn't shout for attention. It's in the food. Bhutanese buyers look for the Assamese red rice they've been eating for generations. Indian workers in Gelephu develop a taste for ema datshi, suja, and the soft quiet of Bhutanese homes.

It's in the languages. Nepali, Assamese, Bodo, Hindi, and Dzongkha mix casually in markets and taxis. People don't switch languages for cultural performance. They do it because that's what life requires here.

It's in the festivals. Many Bhutanese families cross over to Dadgiri during Durga Puja. Indian families step into Gelephu during local Bhutanese celebrations. These exchanges aren't grand or ceremonial. They're organic.

## The Challenges That Linger Beneath the Calm

Dadgiri-Gelephu is peaceful, but not without friction. Flood-

ing affects Dadgiri every monsoon. Economic dependence on border trade means livelihoods fluctuate with policy decisions. Security alerts can tighten the gate overnight. Smuggling attempts, though limited, push authorities to enforce stricter checks. And as Bhutan modernises its immigration and labour systems, Indian workers feel the pressure to adapt.

But both sides handle these tensions with an unusual amount of patience. People understand that the border is their lifeline, and keeping it calm is in everyone's interest.

## What the Border Teaches You About Belonging

Here's what matters. People who grow up in Dadgiri don't see Bhutan as a foreign land. They see it as the next town over. People from Gelephu see Dadgiri not as a chaotic marketplace but as a necessary extension of their own economy.

This small fragment of the India-Bhutan line challenges everything we assume about borders. It shows that neighbours don't have to be rivals. That cultures can overlap without drowning each other out. That people can maintain identity without rejecting connection.

This is a border that functions on respect and routine, not anxiety.

## Why Dadgiri-Gelephu Matters Today

Bottom line: if you want to understand how two countries can share a boundary with trust, start here. Dadgiri brings energy, labour, and trade. Gelephu brings order, opportunity, and a vision for the future. Together, they form a corridor where movement feels natural and coexistence feels normal.

Spend a day in Dadgiri's market, cross into Gelephu's calm lanes, and you'll sense something rare: a border that works not because it is heavily guarded, but because the people on both sides want it to work.

This isn't just a crossing point. It's a relationship. And in this part of the world, that relationship is the real story.





## BARAK FESTIVAL

JANUARY 10-12, 2025

**ACTIVITY PROGRAM**



**10 JAN**  
**NE Cultural Fest**  
 Any Form of Art and Cultural showcase can be showcased here. The Top performances will be invited to perform in the Main Event. Schools, College, University Department, Individual & Group Competition.



**11 JAN**  
**Adventure Sports**  
 Trekking & Canoe, Obstacle Navigation, Sport Climbing, Disaster Management Technique, Water Sports.



**11 JAN**  
**Barak Valley Conclave**  
 Potential, Issues and Challenges of Barak Valley by different stakeholders. Includes NGOs, and Governmental institution for development, awareness, awareness, awareness and awareness through participation through involvement of different stakeholders and institutions.



## BARAK FESTIVAL

JANUARY 10-12, 2025

**ACTIVITY PROGRAM**



**JAN'25**  
**Online Global Fest**  
 All can participate online and send a video clip on Poems, Songs and Dance Performances, Bengali, English, Hindi & Manipuri. Last Date: 31st December 2024.



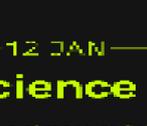
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**Media Conclave**  
 Media Conclave (Media Awards, Workshops, and the Film, Talks and Conferences are part of the 'Barak Festival 2025'. Theme: 'One for All, All for One'. Media Conclave will include a panel discussion, award & certificate for best reporters, print, bloggers, vloggers.



**11 JAN**  
**5E For Success Conclave**  
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**10 JAN**  
**Barak Festival: Peace Progress & Prosperity**



## BARAK FESTIVAL

JANUARY 10-12, 2025

**ACTIVITY PROGRAM**



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